

We claim:

1. A system for providing a graphical user interface for a component based application program, comprising:

at least one user interface component;

at least one component of an application program, said component having a workflow defined for it, said workflow associated with one of said at least one user interface components;

5 at least one predefined user interface layout defining the arrangement of at least said at least one user interface component;

a renderer to render a graphical user interface according to said at least one predefined user interface layout and a present context for said component based application program; and

an application proxy to manage communication between said renderer, said at least one component of an application program and said at least one user interface component such that said graphical user interface is rendered upon a change in said present context.

2. The system claimed in claim 1 wherein said renderer comprises a DHTML browser.

3. The system claimed in claim 2 wherein said predefined user interface layout is a browser page defined in DHTML.

4. The system according to claim 3 wherein said DHTML includes at least one object to communicate with said application proxy.

5. The system according to claim 4 wherein said at least one object is a Javascript object.

6. The system according to claim 2 wherein said at least one user interface component is an ActiveX control.

7. The system according to claim 2 wherein said at least one user interface component is a Java applet.

8. A method of creating a graphical user interface for an application program implemented with a component architecture, comprising the steps of:

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(i) providing at least one application program component, said component requiring at least one user interface component to be displayed in said graphical user interface in at least one context for said application program;

(ii) defining a graphical user interface layout for at least said at least one application program component, said layout defining a position and arrangement for said required at least one user interface component in said at least one context;

(iii) instantiating said user interface component and associating it with said at least one application program component;

(iv) determining the present context of said application program and rendering said graphical user interface in accordance with said at least one layout defined for said context; and

(v) rerendering said graphical user interface each time the context of said application program changes.

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